

# Government of the District of Columbia

## Department of Transportation



### **d.** Planning & Sustainability Division

June 12, 2020

Commissioner Gail Fast  
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6D  
700 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW Apt. 725  
Washington, DC 20024  
Via Email: [6D01@anc.dc.gov](mailto:6D01@anc.dc.gov)

### **NOI # 20-71-PSD**

**Re: Notification for the Installation of one-way protected bikeways, expanded pedestrian areas, and reduction of travel lanes in unit block of Potomac Avenue, SE and 900 through 1400 blocks of First Street, SE**

Dear Chair Fast,

Pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Amendment Act of 2000” D.C. LAW 13-249 (48 DCR 3491 April 20, 2001), the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is required to give a written notice of our intent to upgrade existing painted on-street bikeways to protected bikeways and reduce the number of travel lanes on the 900 through 1400 blocks of First Street, SE and the unit block of Potomac Avenue, SE. This letter is being forwarded to you for the purpose of notification and solicitation of comments on our intent to implement the following in your jurisdiction.

DDOT proposes to:

- Upgrade the existing painted one-way bikeways on the 900 through 1100 and 1300 through 1400 blocks of First Street, SE and the unit block of Potomac Avenue, SE to protected bikeways.
- Remove one travel lane in each direction in the 900 through 1100 blocks of First Street, SE.
- Remove one travel lane in the northbound direction in the 1200 through 1400 blocks of First Street, SE and in the eastbound direction in the unit block of Potomac Avenue, SE.

- Add metered parking along the east side of the 1200 block of First Street, SE.
- Convert the existing parking lanes along the curb on both sides of the street in the 900 through 1100 blocks of First Street, SE and the parking lane along the curb on the southern side of the unit block of Potomac Avenue, SE to pedestrian activation areas.

The existing condition of First Street, SE and Potomac Avenue, SE in this area is two travel lanes, a painted bikeway, and parallel parking in each direction (with the exception of the 1200 block of First Street, SE, which has parallel parking on the west side and protected bike lanes on both sides). North of M Street, SE, the corridor is punctuated by stop-controlled intersections with multi-lane approaches that lead to numerous reports of speeding drivers and frequent failure to obey posted stop signs with several reports of near-misses and crashes by those on foot, bicycle, and in motor vehicles. Having more than one lane at a stop-controlled intersection can obstruct the view of the stop sign, a pedestrian crossing the street, or another vehicle proceeding with the right of way from an intersecting street, leading to crashes in the past. Additionally, due to lack of dedicated loading zones, commercial loading and passenger pickup and drop-off from ridehailing services often occur in the bike lane and outer travel lane, obstructing these lanes and requiring those on bike to weave into general traffic to pass.

The area south of M Street, SE has several signalized intersections. Notably, the 1200 block of First Street, between M and N Streets, SE, has protected bike lanes and parking on the west side of the street. However, the outer northbound travel lane often serves as a de facto parking lane, with commercial loading and courier pick-up from the retail outlets on the west side of the street. The existing protected bikeways were upgraded from painted bikeways on the east and west sides of the street in 2018 and 2019, respectively, but the bikeway on the east side does not have a buffer between the travel lane and the bike lane. As such, drivers park their vehicles directly next to the bikeway which can lead to “dooring” of a cyclist, or a passenger opening their vehicle door into the path of an oncoming cyclist. A buffer is needed to provide adequate space between vehicles and cyclists and since this lane is frequently blocked by parked vehicles, it will be converted into a metered parking lane.

This design will improve safety along the corridor by reducing instances of speeding, shortening the effective crossing distance for pedestrians, eliminating the “multi-threat” crash potential north of M Street, SE, providing physical and spatial separation between people on bicycles and general motor traffic, and providing expanded pedestrian areas for placemaking opportunities.

DDOT anticipates the following benefits:

- Slower vehicular speeds and improved compliance with traffic control devices
- More comfortable bicycling facilities for people traveling in and through the corridor
- Reduction of conflicts between people on bicycles and commercial delivery and ridehail drivers
- Expanded placemaking opportunities for neighborhood residents and visitors

This segment is an important step in expanding the protected bike lane network, now also used by scooters and other personal mobility devices. The First Street/Potomac Avenue, SE corridor is a popular route for cycling to and from events at Nationals Park and Audi Field as well as connecting to the off-street Anacostia Riverwalk Trail. It also has three Capital Bikeshare stations totaling over 73,000 trips in 2019 with a fourth station coming in summer 2020.

All comments on this subject matter must be filed in writing, no later than August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, fifty-one (51) business days after the date of this notice, with the District Department of Transportation Planning and Sustainability Division, 55 M Street, SE, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Washington, DC, 20003 or via email at [greg.matlesky@dc.gov](mailto:greg.matlesky@dc.gov). If you would like to check the status of this Notice of Intent (NOI), please visit DDOT's website at <https://wiki.ddot.dc.gov/display/NOI>. In addition, if you have questions, have trouble accessing the NOI site or are unable to do so, please contact me at 202-497-5086.

Sincerely,



Greg Matlesky  
Bicycle Program Specialist  
Planning & Sustainability Division

Cc: Anna Forgie, Commissioner, ANC 6D02  
Edward Daniels, Commissioner, ANC 6D07  
Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council of the District of Columbia  
Tyler Williams, Ward 6 Liaison, Mayor's Office of Community Relations & Services  
Mikaela Ferrill, Ward 6 Liaison, Mayor's Office of Community Relations & Services  
Jim Sebastian, Associate Director of Planning & Sustainability Division, DDOT  
George Branyan, Active Transportation Branch Manager, DDOT  
Andrew DeFrank, Ward 6 Community Engagement Specialist, DDOT